COASTAL CONSERVANCY

Staff Recommendation
May 26, 2016

LAGUNITAS CREEK FLOODPLAIN AND RIPARIAN ENHANCEMENT DESIGN

Project No. 16-020-01.
Project Manager: Joel Gerwein

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Authorization to disburse up to $490,578 to Turtle Island Restoration Network to produce design plans, prepare permit applications and provide environmental compliance for restoration of floodplain coho salmon rearing habitat on a one mile reach of Lagunitas Creek, Olema, Marin County.

LOCATION: Olema, Marin County

PROGRAM CATEGORY: Integrated Coastal and Marine Resources Protection

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EXHIBITS

Exhibit 1: Project Location Maps

Exhibit 2: Site Photographs

Exhibit 3: Project Letters

RESOLUTION AND FINDINGS:

Staff recommends that the State Coastal Conservancy adopt the following resolution pursuant to Section 31220 of the Public Resources Code:

"The State Coastal Conservancy hereby authorizes the disbursement of an amount not to exceed $490,578 (four hundred ninety thousand five hundred and seventy-eight dollars) to Turtle Island Restoration Network (TIRN) to produce design plans, prepare permit applications and provide environmental compliance for a floodplain restoration project to improve coho salmon rearing habitat along a one mile reach of Lagunitas Creek floodplain near the community of Olema, Marin County, subject to the condition that prior to the disbursement of any funds for the project, TIRN shall submit for the review and approval of the Conservancy's Executive Officer a workplan, schedule and budget, and the names and qualifications of any contractors for the project."

Staff further recommends that the Conservancy adopt the following findings:

"Based on the accompanying staff report and attached exhibits, the State Coastal Conservancy hereby finds that:

1. The proposed authorization is consistent with Chapter 5.5 of Division 21 of the Public Resources Code, regarding Integrated Coastal and Marine Resources Protection projects.
2. The proposed project is consistent with the current Conservancy Project Selection Criteria and Guidelines.
3. The Turtle Island Restoration Network is a nonprofit organization existing under section 501(c)(3) of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code, and whose purposes are consistent with Division 21 of the Public Resources Code."

PROJECT SUMMARY:

Staff recommends authorization to disburse up to $490,578 to Turtle Island Restoration Network (TIRN) to produce design plans, prepare permit applications and provide environmental compliance for restoration of floodplain coho salmon rearing habitat along a one mile reach of Lagunitas Creek floodplain near the community of Olema in Marin County. Restoration of coho habitat in Lagunitas Creek is identified as a core priority by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) in their respective coho recovery plans. This project will facilitate the restoration of hydrologically connected floodplains and redwood forests with high quality aquatic habitat that is essential to sensitive populations of coho salmon, steelhead, and endangered California freshwater shrimp.

Sixty years ago, estimates of the annual Central California Coho population in the Lagunitas Creek Watershed were about 6,000. Now the annual population of adult coho is less than 400 female spawning fish, a greater than 90% decline from historic numbers. This watershed serves a critical role as habitat for endangered coho smolts, but a primary constraint on coho smolt production in the Lagunitas Watershed is winter habitat, which provides low velocity refugia and side-channel habitats (Lagunitas Limiting Factors Analysis, Stillwater Sciences, 2008; San Geronimo Creek Enhancement Plan, Prunuske Chatham Inc. 2009). The only undammed headwaters of Lagunitas Creek are in the San Geronimo Creek Watershed, which are characterized by confined channels with high gradients and incised channels with stream-side development. Salmonid juvenile habitat is very limited in the San Geronimo Watershed, so most smolts rear in the lower reaches of the watershed along Lagunitas Creek including in the project area. These studies and the annual population monitoring done by the Marin Municipal Water District, the Salmon Protection and Watershed Network (SPAWN), and the National Park Service (NPS) all predict that that fish emigrating from the constrained upstream habitat during winter are able to survive long enough to smolt by residing in the mainstem of Lagunitas Creek, primarily in the reach of this project area. Prunuske Chatham Inc. identified the Tocaloma area, included in this project reach, as having the highest potential for the restoration of low velocity, off-channel habitat, despite the fact that a large portion of the reach consists of limited off-channel floodplain habitats as a result of past development (Prunuske Chatham Inc 2009).

The reach of Lagunitas Creek that is the focus of this project was historically a wide alluvial valley floodplain with excellent habitat for coho and steelhead but, beginning in the 1930's, was utilized for the development of numerous large, rural residential properties. Fill was placed in the floodplain for the housing developments, resulting in a 50% reduction in accessible floodplain

habitat in this one mile reach of the creek. Historic development cut off 0.5 miles of historic side channels and oxbow features from the mainstem, elevated the floodplain and disconnected it from the creek, and introduced concrete retaining walls, concrete fill, patios, fences and decks built along the creek that have led to severe channel entrenchment. The creek and riparian area also contain extensive sections of non-native vegetation, an absence of once abundant mature conifer canopy vegetation, and inadequate large woody debris for habitat cover (ESA and SPAWN 2015, "Lagunitas Creek Floodplain and Riparian Enhancement Feasibility Study"). Non-native vegetation including bamboo, vinca, ivy, and Himalayan blackberry covers large portions of the properties within the floodplain area and are threatening the establishment and survival of native vegetation, especially coastal redwood trees that were abundant in this reach prior to the logging in the 1890's. Redwoods are critical to the survival of coho, providing many benefits including bank stability, thermal cover, food, and carbon sequestration. Redwood forests and their associated floodplain habitat need to be re-established in this reach in order to restore high quality coho habitat.

To restore the natural habitat and floodplain function of the site, the Salmon Protection and Watershed Network (SPAWN), a program of TIRN, proposes to design a habitat restoration project with the following specific objectives:

- Removal of berms, concrete retaining walls, and roughly 50,000 yards of non-native landfill;
- Re-contouring of the floodplain to lower elevation and create off-channel habitat features hydrologically connected to the mainstem;
- Removal of invasive vegetation and re-establishment of native riparian redwood forests through the project reach; and
- Addition of numerous large woody debris structures to instream channel to improve hydrologic floodplain function and cover for salmonid habitat.

In order to determine how best to achieve the project objectives, TIRN will first conduct topographic and bathymetric surveys to support engineering analysis, hydraulic modeling and design. The survey data collected will be blended with available LiDAR data to create a comprehensive base map that includes areas adjacent to the proposed limits of work. Data from a tree survey funded by CDFW as part of a restoration feasibility study will be incorporated into the base map.

Next, TIRN will collect and analyze hydrologic data to support the hydraulic modeling and development of design features and key elevations. The project includes hydrologic data collection and analysis to support the hydraulic modeling and development of design features and key elevations. The project design hydrology will be defined based on the best available data including studies and data developed by the Marin Municipal Water District. In addition to analyzing available data from the watershed, a water level gauge and a barometric pressure gauge will be installed at the project site. Data collected will support a hydrologic analysis of the timing and duration of floodplain activation relative to fish life-stage and habitat utilization.

Hydraulic modeling will be conducted to support project design. Existing conditions will be modeled using the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers' Hydrologic Engineering Center's River Analysis System (HEC-RAS) one-dimensional hydraulic model. The hydraulic model will be

used to assess conditions under a range of stream flows and to assess the hydraulic requirements for design and ballasting of Large Wood Structures (LWS) and biotechnical stabilization elements, and evaluate the potential flooding impacts. The results of the final model will be included and discussed in the final Basis of Design Report.

A Basis of Design Report (BoD) will be prepared to document and summarize the approach, analysis, and findings of the topographic survey and base mapping, hydrologic analysis, hydraulic modeling and geomorphic design considerations. The BoD will confirm project goals and objectives.

Construction plans and specifications will be prepared to describe and guide work activities associated with the floodplain, side channel and bank grading, large wood structures and biotechnical and bank stabilization features. The design drawings will include demolition activities, staging and access plan; project layout; grading plan; profiles and cross sections; restoration element details (LWS) and bank stabilization details; revegetation and erosion control plans and details. The design will be reviewed by stakeholders and regulatory agency staff at the 30%, 65%, 90% and final levels of completion. The design plans and specifications will be developed for the comprehensive set of project actions. This will allow for construction to occur in a single effort to be phased over multiple construction seasons, if necessary, based on funding and coordination with stakeholders and NPS. Project planning will also include the preparation of a monitoring plan to evaluate site conditions and response following construction.

The project also involves environmental compliance work, involving analysis of potential impacts of the final designs under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and the preparation of necessary permit applications. A combined document satisfying the project's regulatory requirements for CEQA and NEPA will be prepared. It is anticipated that the preparation of an Initial Study/Environmental Assessment will lead to the preparation of a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) and Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI). CEQA and NEPA work will also include public outreach to solicit input in scoping and designing the project. The project will include public meetings to present and discuss the proposed design to the interested public. The CEQA lead agency will be the CDFW. The NPS will act as the lead NEPA agency. Permit applications that are expected to be necessary include: US Army Corps of Engineers 401, Regional Water Quality Control Board 404, California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) 1600, Marin County Creek Permit, Marin County Grading Permit and NPS Land Use Permit.

The project also includes propagation of 1,500 locally-sourced native plants that will be planted at the site following the floodplain restoration. SPAWN staff and volunteers will collect and care for native trees, grasses, shrubs, and forbs for the revegetation of the site following the floodplain restoration activities. The plant materials that will be collected are seeds and cuttings collected from permitted areas entirely within the Lagunitas Creek Watershed. The project will involve low-income youth in the propagation work. As part of an ongoing partnership with Oakland High School (OHS) in Oakland, SPAWN will bring 1,200 students to Lagunitas Creek over the course of this project to participate in the propagation of native redwood trees that will be planted at the site.

As part of a larger pre-restoration effort, the National Park Service is removing abandoned structures from the project area using NPS funds. This pre-restoration effort would not be funded by the Conservancy; rather, the NPS is providing $563,000 in funds and staff time to

carry it out. The NPS will remove 15 abandoned homes, 10 garages, 9 sheds, and 1,150 feet of chain link fencing from a one-mile stretch of Lagunitas Creek. The removal will begin in the summer of 2016 and will include the recycling of metal, aluminum, wiring, and fencing. All structures and associated shallow foundations will be removed. The NPS has already permitted this project in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act.

TIRN is highly qualified to carry out this work. TIRN has been involved with habitat restoration, research, and planning projects in the Lagunitas Creek Watershed for 23 years and has been responsible for implementing 35 habitat restoration, protection, and planning projects totaling $ 2.7 million. These projects have included unpaved road upgrades, floodplain restoration, culvert replacement, stream bank stabilization, dam removal, land acquisition, riparian vegetation restoration, habitat planning, salmonid population monitoring, and water quality monitoring. TIRN has been awarded four achievement awards by the California Salmonid Restoration Federation for excellence in designing and implementing habitat restoration projects.

Site Description: The project area is located along a one-mile stretch of Lagunitas Creek beginning 6.4 miles above the Highway 1 Bridge in Point Reyes Station, CA (see Exhibit 1). This stretch of creek is located entirely within the Golden Gate National Recreation Area. Sir Francis Drake Blvd. runs parallel with Lagunitas Creek through the project reach. The project extends from the TIRN offices to the downstream extent of the Samuel P. Taylor State Park border. The characteristics of the creek and floodplain in the project area are described above in the "Project Summary" section.

Project History: The Conservancy has supported recovery efforts for coho salmon and other fish and wildlife species in the Lagunitas Creek watershed for many years. The Conservancy funded the County to implement a fish passage improvement project on Woodacre Creek in the Lagunitas Creek watershed in 2008. The Conservancy provided a $100,000 grant to the County of Marin in 2008 to prepare an enhancement plan for San Geronimo Creek, a tributary to Lagunitas Creek, and a second grant to begin implementing the plan in 2010. TIRN submitted a proposal for this project to the Conservancy's second Proposition 1 grant round in December 2015. The project was reviewed in the competitive grant round along with many other projects and ranked highly in the review process. Staff is recommending this project as it meets the priorities and criteria described in the Conservancy's Request for Proposals.

PROJECT FINANCING

Coastal Conservancy	$490,578
Turtle Island Restoration Network	$29,868
Project Total	**$520,446**

The anticipated source of funding for this project is the fiscal year 2015 appropriation from the Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act of 2014 (Proposition 1, Water Code § 79700 et seq.). Funds appropriated to the Conservancy derive from Chapter 6 (commencing with § 79730) and may be used "for multi-benefit water quality, water supply, and watershed protection and restoration projects for the watersheds of the state" (Section 79731). Section

79732(a) states more specifically that these funds may be used to "implement watershed adaptation projects in order to reduce the impacts of climate change on California's communities and ecosystems." Consistent with this provision, the project will facilitate floodplain restoration that will reduce downstream flooding from storm events that are expected to increase in frequency with climate change. The project would therefore further assist with adaptation to climate change for downstream residents of the watershed. Section 79732(a) also states that these funds may be used to "protect and restore aquatic, wetland, and migratory bird ecosystems including fish and wildlife corridors," "collaborate with federal agencies in the protection of fish native to California," and "assist in the recovery of endangered, threatened, or migratory species by improving watershed health". Consistent with these provisions, the project would plan for the restoration of aquatic and wetland ecosystems serving as fish and wildlife corridors for native Californian endangered coho, in collaboration with the NPS.

As required by Proposition 1, the proposed project provides multiple benefits. By facilitating restoration of floodplain and riparian habitat in the Lagunitas Creek watershed, the project will benefit depleted native fish populations and other aquatic and avian species that utilize riparian habitat. This project will also produce economic benefits by facilitating the recovery of coho and steelhead, which support recreational fisheries. The project will also further climate change adaptation by reducing downstream flooding.

In accordance with Section 79707(b) which requires agencies to prioritize "projects that leverage private, federal, or local funding or produce the greatest public benefit", this project leverages federal contributions described in the "Project Summary" section, and local cash and in-kind contributions as discussed in the second paragraph below.

The project was reviewed and subsequently recommended for funding through a competitive grant process under the Conservancy's *Proposition 1 Grant Program Guidelines* adopted in June 2015 ("Prop 1 Guidelines"). (See Section 79706(a)). The proposed project meets each of the evaluation criteria in the Prop 1 Guidelines as described in further detail in this "Project Financing" section, the "Project Summary" section and in the "Consistency with Conservancy's Project Selection Criteria & Guidelines" section of this staff recommendation.

TIRN will contribute $29,868 to pay for staff time and benefits, as well as administrative overhead. TIRN will also provide in-kind contributions of survey field equipment including field vehicles, waders, GPS units, and volunteer labor. SPAWN's in-kind contribution is valued at approximately $8,500.

CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY'S ENABLING LEGISLATION:

The proposed project is undertaken pursuant to Chapter 5.5 of Division 21 of the Public Resources Code (Section 31220), as follows:

Pursuant to Section 31220, the Conservancy may undertake projects to protect and restore coastal habitats if the project "protects or restores fish and wildlife habitat within coastal and marine waters and coastal watersheds." Consistent with this section, the proposed project will facilitate the restoration and enhancement of riparian areas that provide habitat for fish and wildlife, including listed species, in the Lagunitas Creek watershed.

Consistent with section 31220(a), the Conservancy has consulted with the State Water Resources Control Board in the development of the project to ensure consistency with Chapter 3 of Division 20.4 of the Public Resources Code regarding water quality. (See Exhibit 3, Project Letters).

Section 31220(c) states that "projects funded pursuant to this section shall include a monitoring and evaluation component and shall be consistent with the following, if available and relevant to the project..." A monitoring plan will be prepared as part of the project. The proposed project is consistent with applicable and relevant Integrated Regional Water Management programs, local watershed management plans, and water quality control plans adopted by the state or regional water quality control boards, as discussed in the "Required Criteria" and "Consistency with Local Watershed Management Plan/State Water Quality Plan" sections below.

CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY'S 2013 STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL(S) & OBJECTIVE(S), AS REVISED JUNE 25, 2015:

Consistent with **Goal 5, Objective C** of the Conservancy's 2013-2018 Strategic Plan, the proposed project will develop a plan to preserve and enhance Lagunitas Creek, a coastal watershed and floodplain area. The proposed project involves the preparation of a plan and designs to restore floodplain and riparian habitat along Lagunitas Creek, which, once implemented, will enhance the creek and the fish and wildlife habitat it provides.

Consistent with **Goal 9, Objective A** of the Conservancy's 2013-2018 Strategic Plan, the proposed project will support a program to improve public understanding of coastal resources by working with youth to propagate native plants for the Lagunitas Creek floodplain restoration and educating them about salmon habitat.

CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY'S PROJECT SELECTION CRITERIA & GUIDELINES:

The proposed project is consistent with the Conservancy's Project Selection Criteria and Guidelines, last updated on October 2, 2014, in the following respects:

Required Criteria

1. **Promotion of the Conservancy's statutory programs and purposes:** See the "Consistency with Conservancy's Enabling Legislation" section above.
2. **Consistency with purposes of the funding source:** See the "Project Financing" section above.
3. **Promotion and implementation of state plans and policies:** The project will help implement two priority actions identified in the 2014 *California Water Action Plan* (CWAP):

   Action 4: Protect and Restore Important Ecosystems. The project will implement this action by providing designs for a riparian and instream habitat restoration project in Lagunitas Creek, a coastal watershed, which will provide valuable fish and wildlife habitat.

Action 8: Increase Flood Protection. The CWAP calls for action to address flooding threats due to aging levee infrastructure and sea level rise due to climate change. The project will implement this action by planning a floodplain restoration project that will increase floodplain storage and channel conveyance on Lagunitas Creek, providing protection for downstream residents in the watershed from flooding and storm damage that will increase with sea level rise.

The project will implement a Management Measure identified in the *California Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Program* prepared by the State Water Resources Control Board in 2000: MM6B- Restoration of Wetlands and Riparian Areas. The project will further the following statewide goals and conservation strategies of the *California Wildlife Action Plan* (Wildlife Plan), prepared by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife in 2015:

Goal 3.3 (Hydrological Regime): Maintain or improve hydrological regimes vital for sustaining ecosystems (including riverine, lacustrine, and estuarine hydrodynamics). (pg. 4-3)

The project will further Goal 3.3. by producing a restoration design which, once implemented, will reconnect Lagunitas Creek with it floodplain. Floodplain connectivity will improve the creek's hydrologic regime by reducing the flashiness of the hydrograph and allowing for sediment deposition in the floodplain. Sediment deposition in the floodplain will reduce the threat of the loss of conveyance capacity in the creek, which would disrupt the hydrologic regime.

The project when implemented will help meet the following goals identified by the Wildlife Plan for North Coastal Riparian Forest and Woodland on the North Coast:

By 2025, acres of habitat (riparian) are increased by at least 5 percent from 2015 acres.

By 2025, acres where native species are dominant are increased by at least 5 percent from 2015 acres.

By 2025, acres/miles with desired channel pattern (natural floodplain) are increased by at least 5 percent from 2015 acres/miles.

By 2025, miles connected (to natural floodplain) are increased by at least 5 percent from 2015 miles. (pg 5.1-37-38)

The project would further these goals by producing a restoration plan which, once implemented, would restore 10 acres of riparian habitat where native species are dominant, and reconnect approximately one mile of Lagunitas Creek to its floodplain.

The project will help implement the following conservation strategies identified by the Wildlife Plan for anadromous salmonids statewide:

Enhance and protect key spawning and rearing habitat for each specific anadromous species; and

Restore marsh and riparian habitat to improve carrying capacity of anadromous fishes;

(pg. 6-19)

The project would further these strategies by producing a restoration plan which, once implemented, would enhance rearing habitat for coho salmon and steelhead in Lagunitas

Creek and restore 10 acres of riparian habitat which will benefit coho salmon by providing winter refugia from high flows for juveniles.

The project would help implement the following tasks identified in the *Recovery Strategy for California Coho Salmon*, prepared by CDFW in 2004:

- Lagunitas Creek Task BM-LA-16: Recommend the NPS continue practices to benefit coho salmon, which include restoration projects.
- Rangewide- Task XIII-C-02: Where appropriate and feasible, work with all parties, including landowners, to reconfigure levees and channelized streams to benefit coho salmon.
- Rangewide- Task XV-B-01: Maintain or re-establish geographic distribution of coho salmon by continuing to allocate substantial improvement efforts towards identified key refugia with substantial coho salmon populations and/or otherwise suitable conditions.
- Rangewide- Task XXII-A-04 Encourage restoration of LWD and shade by improvement of existing riparian zones through planting, release of conifers or other appropriate native species, and control of blackberries and other competitors.

4. **Support of the public:** The project is broadly supported, including by Marin County Supervisor Damon Connolly, Congressman Jared Huffman, and Assembly Member Marc Levine (Exhibit 3).
5. **Location:** The Lagunitas Creek watershed is a coastal watershed, but the project area is located just outside the coastal zone, one mile upstream of the boundary of Samuel P. Taylor State Park. Although the project area is located outside the coastal zone, it provides critical habitat to maintain and restore salmon and steelhead populations, a coastal resource.
6. **Need:** The project will not occur without Conservancy funding, as none of the other partners have funding available for preparation of the plan and for environmental compliance costs.
7. **Greater-than-local interest:** The public trust value of California's salmon and steelhead populations, valuable state resources, warrant the enhancement of historically rich but degraded habitat areas, such as the Lagunitas Creek watershed. The watershed is prioritized for restoration in federal and state recovery plans for coho salmon, as discussed above.
8. **Sea level rise vulnerability:** The project area is not tidally influenced and will not be vulnerable to flooding related to sea level rise.

Additional Criteria

9. **Urgency:** The precarious status of salmonid populations makes it urgent to move forward with restoration planning on Lagunitas Creek.
10. **Leverage**: See the "Project Financing" section above.
11. **Readiness**: TIRN and its partners are ready to proceed with the design, environmental analysis and permit applications for restoration of Lagunitas Creek as soon as funding is available.

12. **Realization of prior Conservancy goals**: See "Project History" above.
13. **Return to Conservancy**: See the "Project Financing" section above.
14. **Cooperation**: The public and TIRN will contribute significantly to the project as discussed above in the "Project Summary" section.
15. **Vulnerability from climate change impacts other than sea level rise:** Project design will address higher flows expected from storm events of increasing severity expected to result from climate change. The project will be designed to reduce flooding of downstream reaches by increasing flood storage and channel conveyance capacity in the project reach.
16. **Minimization of greenhouse gas emissions:** The project will be designed to include measures to avoid or minimize greenhouse gas emissions to the extent feasible and consistent with the project objectives.

CONSISTENCY WITH LOCAL COASTAL PROGRAM POLICIES:

While the project is located outside the coastal zone, it will facilitate floodplain and riparian habitat restoration for a reach of Lagunitas Creek, which drains to Tomales Bay. This project will enhance the scenic values and wildlife habitat values of the Lagunitas Creek watershed. The proposed project is therefore consistent with the Coastal Act, section 30231 which states "(t)he biological productivity and the quality of coastal waters, streams, wetlands, estuaries, and lakes appropriate to maintain optimum populations of marine organisms and for the protection of human health shall be maintained, and, where feasible, restored through, among other means, minimizing adverse effects of waste water discharges and entrainment, controlling runoff, preventing depletion of groundwater supplies and substantial interference with surface waterflow, encouraging waste water reclamation, maintaining natural vegetation buffer areas that protect riparian habitats, and minimizing alteration of natural streams." (Pub. Res. Code § 30231). By reversing past inappropriate land use practices, the proposed project will expand, protect and enhance the aquatic and riparian habitat of Lagunitas Creek for the benefit of federally listed salmonids. Units I and II of the Marin County LCP identify Marin's numerous coastal zone streams and creeks as sensitive habitats for many species of birds and fish. Lagunitas Creek contains runs of coho and steelhead and is specifically highlighted in the LCP. (LCP, Unit II at p. 65).

Sedimentation, water pollution, and protection of riparian habitats are identified as the key concerns for protecting the aquatic resources of the Lagunitas Creek watershed, and the Tomales Bay ecosystem into which Lagunitas Creek flows. (LCP, Unit II at pp. 66-67). Because the proposed project will restore riparian and in-stream habitat to a portion of the Lagunitas Creek watershed, restore the in-stream habitat of the project areas, and improve sediment transport by restoring connectivity with the floodplain and reducing channel entrenchment, the proposed project is consistent with the LCP Policies.

CONSISTENCY WITH LOCAL WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PLAN/ STATE WATER QUALITY CONTROL PLAN:

The project is consistent with, and furthers the goals of, the Tomales Bay Watershed Stewardship Plan, prepared by the Tomales Bay Watershed Council in July 2003. The project is consistent with Goal B of the Tomales Bay Watershed Stewardship Plan, as implementation of the plan would improve the integrity of natural habitats and native communities.

The project is also consistent with the Tomales Bay Integrated Coastal Watershed Management Plan ("ICWMP"), completed in September 2007. The ICWMP is a cooperative effort by the Tomales Bay Watershed Council, Bolinas Community Public Utilities District, Inverness Public Utility District, Marin Municipal Water District, and North Marin Water District to identify management strategies and regional and projects that meet multiple objectives for the Tomales Bay region. The project is consistent with ICWMP Objective 5, as implementation of the plan for Lagunitas Creek would improve streams and riparian areas for native species, including salmonids and redwoods (ICWMP at p. 3-12). The project is consistent with ICWMP Objective 6, as implementation of the plan would improve habitats of special status species, including coho salmon and steelhead, California freshwater shrimp, Northern spotted owl, and California red-legged frog (ICWMP at p. 3-12).

The proposed project is also consistent with the Water Quality Control Plan for the San Francisco Bay Basin (adopted by the Regional Water Quality Control Board Central Coast Region in 1995 and reviewed every three years ("Water Quality Control Plan") in that it constitutes an important step towards the enhancement of fish and wildlife habitat, including habitat for federally-listed species steelhead and coho salmon in the Lagunitas Creek watershed. The project will protect and improve the following beneficial uses identified for the Lagunitas Creek watershed in the Water Quality Control Plan (Table 2-1):

- Cold Freshwater Habitat
- Wildlife Habitat
- Preservation of Rare and Endangered Species
- Fish Migration

COMPLIANCE WITH CEQA:

The proposed project is statutorily exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), pursuant to 14 California Code of Regulations Section 15262, which exempts planning and feasibility studies for possible future actions that have not yet been approved or funded. Consistent with Section 15262, the project will only involve preparation of plans and information necessary for environmental review and permit applications for possible future restoration actions that the Conservancy has not yet approved or funded, and will consider environmental factors in the preparation of an environmental document for the restoration project. The project is also categorically exempt under Section 15306 in that the proposed project funds basic data collection and resource evaluation activities that will not have a major disturbance to an environmental resource. The proposed project includes the collection of plant material for native plant propagation, which is categorically exempt under Section 15304 since the plant material

collection is a minor alteration in the condition of vegetation and does not involve the removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees. Propagation of plants for future revegetation activities is categorically exempt under Section 15301, because it consists of the operation of an existing private facility, TIRN's native plant nursery, involving negligible expansion of use beyond that existing at the current time. Upon approval, staff will file a Notice of Exemption for this project.